

English in Denmark: Language Attitudes of Young Danes and Domains of Usage

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Introduction

English established its position as Europe's lingua franca and language of politics and diplomacy after the Second World War (Darquennes 2016, 33). The political, economic, and military power and influence of the US, also in terms of popular culture and world media, caused a norm shift in EFL (English as Foreign Language) learners from Received Pronunciation (RP) to Standard American (SA) (Ladegaard and Sachdev 2008, 92). In most countries of the European Union, English is often introduced as the first foreign language learnt in primary school (Garton and Copland 2015, 321), resulting in exposure to English early on. In Denmark, exposure to English can be seen in everyday life, such as work, free time, grocery shopping, or on the Internet, with English words and phrases becoming increasingly more common (Preisler 2005, 238). This omnipresence can also be attributed to globalisation and digitalisation processes. Most of the population is well versed in the English language, and English functions increasingly as a dominant second language in Denmark. The English Proficiency Index 2025 by *Education First* places Denmark on the 7th place in the global ranking, indicating that Danish people have a very high proficiency of English with most points scored in the areas of reading and listening (Education First 2025, 33).

The English language even gained foothold in communal politics as seen in the latest local elections across Denmark in November 2025. With an increasing number of internationals living in Denmark who are eligible to vote, politicians from different parties participated in events to talk to internationals which were held in English (ESN Aarhus and AU International Committee 2025). The party *Radikale Venstre* even ran its campaign in multiple languages, including English, as a sign of hospitality and to demonstrate that internationals have the same rights as Danish citizens do (TheCopenhagenPost 2025). This is a clear advancement of English into the political and public domain. English has also gained influence in the academic domain where over 80% of the total

scientific output is in English and almost 50% of master's programmes are offered in English (Dimova, Hultgren and Kling 2021, 144).

Thus, the aim of this article is to examine whether young Danes display a more favourable attitude towards American English than other varieties of English, as well as to research in which domains (social, academic, and digital) English shapes the communication of young Danes the most. This article analyses the results of a survey completed by young Danes residing in Aarhus, which explores language attitudes toward different varieties of English as well as their domains of use. The statements and questions for this survey are based on previous questionnaire and survey studies by Davydova (2020), Krug, Schützler and Werner (2020), and Kavalir and Poteko (2022).

First, this article provides a contextual overview of the status of English in Denmark, focusing on language attitudes and domains of use, while also clarifying relevant terminology. Next, the survey, the data used for this analysis, and the methodology will be examined. After that, the findings will be presented. Then, the results will be discussed within the scope of the current state of research sometimes also taking collected sociodemographic data into consideration. Finally, this article will conclude by summarising the findings, considering possible future directions of development, as well as addressing limitations of this study.

English in Denmark

Denmark has no official language or language institution as Danish is not ratified by law to be the language of the state which rather encourages standardisation and dedialectalisation processes (Siiner 2010, 43-45). All language change processes are caused by the Danes themselves and institutions like schools, as the government seldom intervenes in such matters. Danish language culture is seen as a “free choice that belongs to the private sphere, outside the realm of organized politics” (Siiner 2010, 54). Yet most attitudes towards English are still influenced by political decisions to make Denmark a suitable player in the globalising world. Though there is some concern that English might replace Danish in some domains, the ability to speak English is considered a status symbol and associated with a higher socio-economic class and better job opportunities. Additionally, Danish has been in contact with other languages such as German, Latin, and English throughout the last centuries, and has constantly incorporated different elements from those languages into its own repertoire (Siiner 2010, 45, 47, 49, 51). Thus, “English and the national Nordic language can be said to be in a complementary relationship, each being used to different extents for different communicative purposes” (Hultgren 2016, 156).

Language attitudes

Language attitudes are evaluative judgements about different varieties of a language and their speakers based on feelings, thoughts, beliefs, and actions towards said language, which can also be extended to include particular linguistic features and phenomena such as code-switching or multilingualism (Kircher and Zipp 2022, 4-5). Kavalir and Poteko (2022, 39) argue that language is a way of expressing identity and language attitudes stem from “the context of the identity that an individual has within the group or society to which they belong”. This also refers to the attitudes towards language change, groups, or preference (Kavalir and Poteko 2022, 39).

Language is closely linked to the social identity and is one of the most important symbols of group membership. “Attitudes towards particular varieties therefore reflect the attitudes that people hold towards their users” (Kircher and Zipp 2022, 5), which can lead to categorisation and stereotyping. When the status and prestige of a language user change due to cultural changes or developments, attitudes can change too. Language ideologies regarding certain varieties of a language or features can also influence language attitudes. Additionally, language attitudes can also have an influence on the decision to learn a language, the frequency of how often a language is used, language loss and shift, but also language revitalisation and maintenance. Status and solidarity are usually the two aspects used to evaluate language attitudes. High-status languages are automatically affiliated with economic power and upward mobility indicating their high value. In-group loyalty is an important factor when evaluating language solidarity as it reflects the degree of attachment and sense of belonging toward a language variety (Kircher and Zipp 2022, 5-6, 8, 11).

Most Danes do not feel threatened by the increasing spread of English but rather see it as an opportunity to access different kinds of media and increase socio-economic mobility (Preisler 2005, 240-241; Ferguson 2015, 6). The status of the English language prevails, especially in Denmark, where it enjoys high prestige and is seen as a possibility to participate in international affairs (Preisler 2005, 239). As previously mentioned, English is now frequently used in the political and academic sphere where it is used as a “common medium of intercultural communication [...] among speakers from different lingua-cultural backgrounds” (Cogo 2016, 79).

Domains of usage

The original concept of domains “was an attempt to sort out different areas of language use in multilingual societies, which are relevant for language choice” (Haberland 2005, 227), like the domain of family or education. A bilingual speaker usually unconsciously uses one or the other language depending on the situation (Haberland 2005, 232). Preisler (2005, 244) defines a domain as “an area of social practice that can be identified on the basis of the nature and special

characteristics of the practice, its localization in time and place, and its domain-specific role relationships.” The idea of *domain loss* addresses the concern that English could drive out the national language, here Danish, in a domain, particularly higher education and multinational corporations, causing Danish to potentially lose status and ultimately cease to exist (Hultgren 2016, 153; Dimova, Hultgren and Kling 2021, 144). Early stages of domain loss usually involve an increase in English lexical borrowings; however, currently English loan words amount to less than 1% of words (Hultgren 2016, 154-155).

It has also advanced into the domains of higher education, business, youth culture, as well as media (Ferguson 2015, 4). English taking over as the dominant language in some of those domains has caused several countries such as Sweden to feel threatened, resulting in taking legal measures to ensure the status of their national language as principal language of the country (Ferguson 2015, 4). In Denmark too, the English language is integrated into the everyday speech, either as lingua franca or as codeswitches (Gottlieb 2023, 1), which has also caused a public debate on possible consequences and the need of language policies (Preisler 2005, 239). The Danish right-wing party even uses these anxieties to nourish their nationalistic and xenophobic agenda (Hultgren 2016, 158). The influence of English can be seen especially in the domain of media and higher education. A lot of the films and series shown on Danish TV are produced in either the US or the UK and are usually shown in the original version. Likewise, university programmes are offered, and research papers are published in English to reach a wider and more international audience (Haberland 2005, 228; Preisler 2005, 247).

Though this gives the impression that English has taken over in the higher education domain, it would be too grave to speak of a loss of domain. In the social sciences and humanities, it is much more common to also use other languages to publish in. Additionally, student project groups and researchers tend to converse more frequently in Danish than in English (Preisler 2005, 244). Denmark has been multilingual for a long time, and the only languages that suffered domain loss are French and German (Haberland 2005, 233-234). Haberland (2005, 236) argues that the term *domain loss* should be reframed and rather seen as dealing with “language choice in linguistic communities as a way of making best use of linguistic resources.” The chosen language depends on “the relationship between participants in the social networks existing within this environment” (Preisler 2005, 245), meaning that in a situation where everyone considers Danish as their mother tongue, every form of communication will be in Danish.

Methodology

The survey

To investigate the language attitudes and domains of usage, I conducted a small-scale survey. The survey was created with the software *SoSci Survey* which is a German provider for creating professional online surveys and is free if used for academic purposes. Participants were able to fill out the survey from 17 December to 25 December 2025, and it was sent out on Facebook Messenger. Before starting the survey, participants were informed about the purpose of the study, the estimated duration, that participation was voluntary, and that the data would be anonymous and would only be used for academic purposes. The statements and questions about language attitudes and domains of usage (see Appendix A) are based on previous questionnaire and survey studies by Davydova (2020) about attitudes in German students of English and the domains of usage of English in Germany, and Kavalir and Poteko (2022) about attitudes of Slovene students of English towards English and Slovene. The questions about sociodemographic information which can be found in the *Bamberg Survey of Lexical Variation and Change* used by Krug, Schützler and Werner (2020) inspired the sociodemographic questions. All question/statement fields, except for the comments, were mandatory fields.

In the first part, participants were asked to answer questions about their age, gender, nationality, current qualifications, study subject, current occupation, intended accent, and time spent abroad to collect metadata that can be used to interpret the findings. Questions about age, nationality, current occupation, and study subject were open-ended. Those answers were normalised in the final Excel sheet to make the filtering, analysing, and visualisation process easier. Questions about gender and time spent abroad were closed-ended and participants were able to choose from fixed answer options (male/female/non-binary, yes/no). When asked about qualifications, they were able to choose from the following answer options: Bachelor, Master's, PhD, Vocational classes, Apprenticeship, Other. The question about their intended English accent allowed the following answers: British English (BrE), American English (AmE), Danish English (DaE), and No preference. In a follow-up comment field, participants were asked to elaborate on why they chose the accent. The last question asked about a possible stay abroad. If answered with yes, participants were then asked to indicate which country they lived in and for how long they stayed there.

The second part of the survey investigated the language attitudes of young Danes. Participants were asked to indicate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with the given statement/question, and answers were recorded in a five-point Likert scale (I strongly disagree, I disagree, No opinion, I agree, I strongly agree). The first set of questions, taken from Kavalir and

Poteko (2022), asked about general and personal language attitudes towards English. The second set of statements, taken from Davydova (2020), was interested in attitudes directed at four specific varieties of English, namely BrE, AmE, DaE, and Indian English (InE). Answers were also recorded in a five-point Likert scale. The six statements were the same for all four varieties to ensure comparability. At the end, participants were able to comment on why they preferred one English accent over another.

The third and final part was concerned with the domains of usage of English, which included the social/personal, academic, digital, professional, and private spheres. The questions, taken from Davydova (2020) and Kavalir and Poteko (2022), asked about the amount of informal and formal exposure to English, the use of English in spontaneous speech, and general communication. In general, open-ended questions were used sparsely and answers were recorded in either a three-, five- or six-point Likert scale, as this article is primarily interested in the initial judgement of the respondents.

After the access to the survey closed, the data was extracted from *SoSci Survey* to an Excel spread sheet, which was then edited to ensure optimal analyses and visualisations by using the Excel filter function and visualisation tools. The target population for this survey was young Danes currently living in Aarhus. Most of them are students at Aarhus University, either studying English or another subject which was normalised as “Non-English”. Non-English subjects included Anthropology, Molecular Biology, Computer Science, Philosophy, Human Security, Art History, Political Science, (Marine) Engineering, Marketing, Business Communication, Musicology, and Commercial and Retail Management. Due to the scope and time constraint of this article, the total number of participants amounts to 27. This is not enough to generalise the findings but gives a good indication in what directions the current development is going. Due to the manageable size of the data set, this article works with ordinary numbers that directly translate to the number of participants, and percentages of the total number of participants. It is expected that the findings of this survey will confirm trends already established by previous research.

The data set

The participants are aged between 20 and 27. Out of the 27 participants, 19 indicated their gender as female, six as male, and two as non-binary. The number of female participants is thus three times as high as the number of males. As this study does not intend to be a comparative study with a focus on the influence of gender on language attitudes, this does not pose a problem. Except for two participants who indicated having an additional nationality (Macedonian and German), all participants identified as Danish. Most participants have attended university, with half having

completed or currently studying in their Bachelor's degree and nine currently studying in their Master's degree. One participant attended vocational classes, and one is currently doing an apprenticeship.

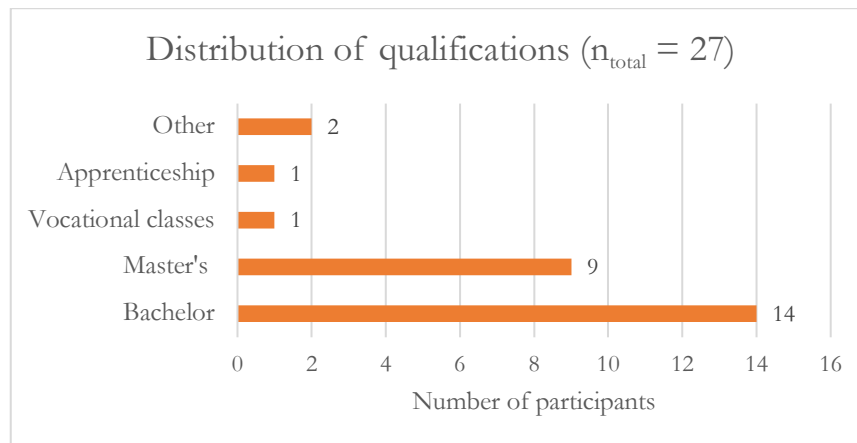


Figure 1. Distribution of participants by qualification.

Over half of the participants are studying or have studied non-English subjects, eight people study just English and four study English with an additional subject.

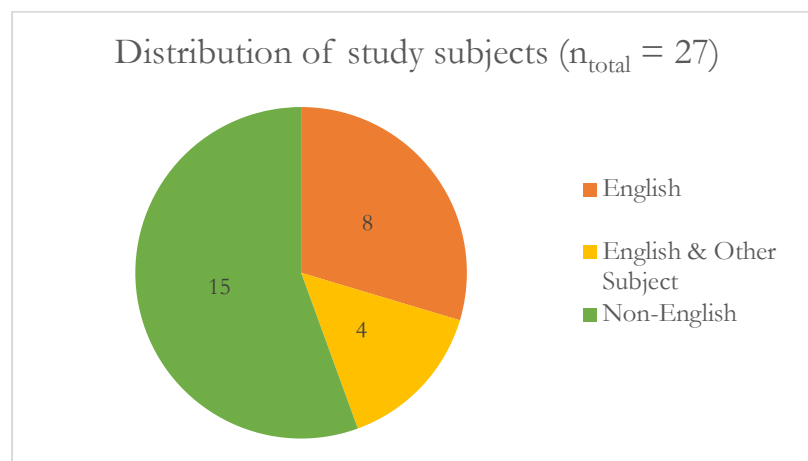


Figure 2. Distribution of participants by field of study.

Almost all participants indicated that their current occupation is being a student, with four also having a student job. There are three non-students in this data set: Two participants who are already in full-time employment and one apprentice. When asked about their intended accent, almost a third indicated that they aim for an American accent, almost another third indicated that they have no preference, five indicated that they aim for a Danish accent, while BrE is the accent least aimed for, with only two people choosing it.

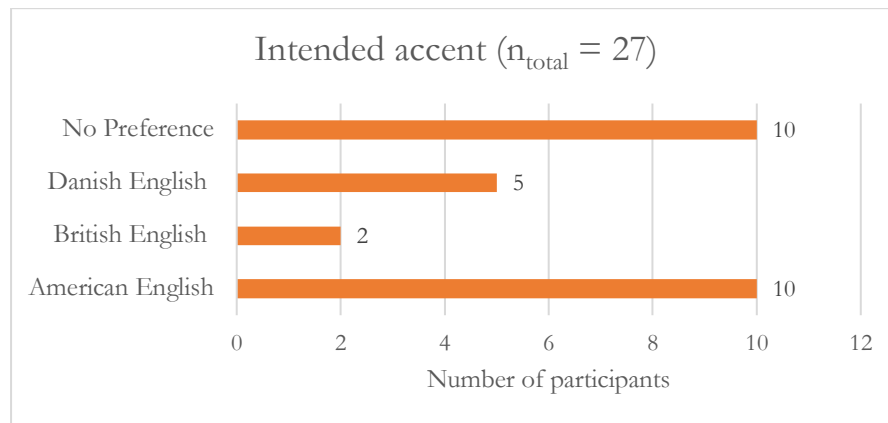


Figure 3. Intended accent of participants.

A total of six people out of the 27 participants (22%) indicated that they spent at least 5 to 6 months abroad in English-speaking countries (England, Australia, Ireland), and Sweden.

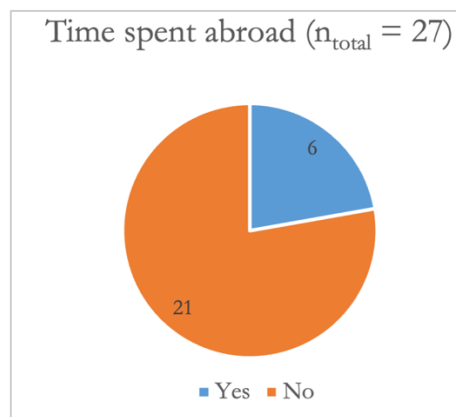


Figure 4. Distribution of participants based on whether they spent time abroad or not.

Four of those six are English students. Interestingly, all six people did not indicate BrE as their intended accent, even though a stay abroad in the UK would suggest that. Rather, the participants who went to England and Ireland have no preference and justify it by either saying they don't aim for an accent, having a hard time sticking to an accent and accommodating to the person they are speaking to, or mixing all accents due to personal reasons. The participants who went to Australia and Sweden indicated to speak with an American accent and justified it by stating that they were influenced by teachers in school, TV series, music, and pop culture in general.

Results

Language attitudes of young Danes

Around 55% of the participants agreed or strongly agreed that they read and listen to English out of necessity, as there is not enough content available in Danish (see Figure 5). Only a fourth disagreed and five people had no opinion. Over 70% of the participants agreed that they often cannot think of a word in Danish and thus prefer to use the English word, and around 66% agreed that some things cannot be said well enough in Danish and thus use English. Though most participants agreed with those statements, only a few strongly agreed with them.

Participants felt that Danish is closer to them than English: Around 63% of participants agreed, around 19% disagreed and around 19% had no opinion. Half of the participants (52%) did not think that English sounds better than Danish and thus prefer to use it. Around 55% also did not agree that they find it easier to express themselves in English than in Danish. There is a considerable 33% who would agree with this statement though. It also seems that this is a matter of either agreeing or disagreeing, as only three people had no opinion on it. 60% of the participants do not think it is easier to talk about intimate feelings or unpleasant topics in English. A third (33%) agreed and only 7% expressed no opinion. It seems that this statement too is very personal and emotional with most people either (strongly) agreeing or disagreeing with the statement.

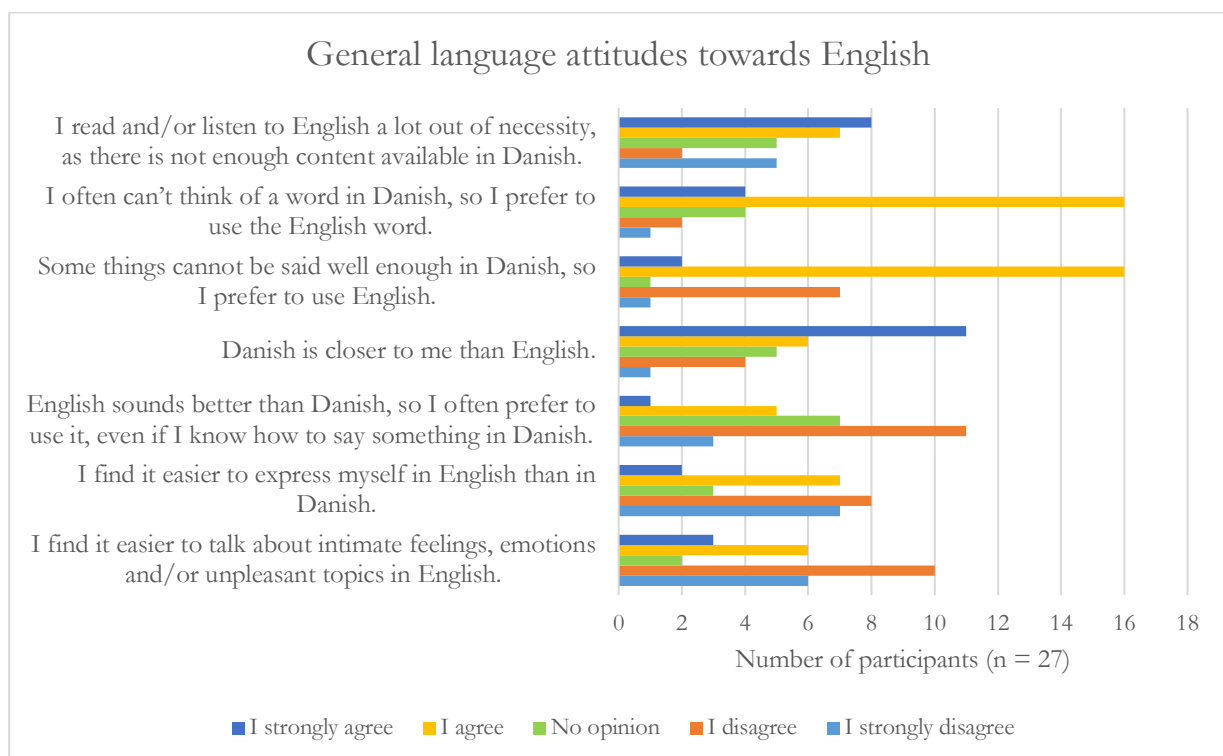


Figure 5. Personal language attitudes towards English.

However, a little over a third (37%) agreed that BrE is a high-status variety (see Figure 6) and 41% agreed that it is a prestigious variety, at least half of them had no opinion on the matter and very few disagreed. Two-thirds (66%) agreed that BrE is socially attractive and a third (33%) expressed no opinion. Barely anyone would use BrE to express solidarity, with around 63% actively disagreeing and 30% having no opinion. Only 7% of the participants feel that BrE is a form they strongly identify with, barely anyone had no opinion (15%), and an overwhelming majority (77%) disagreed, with 45% even strongly disagreeing. 26% agree that they speak BrE, but over half disagree with that statement.

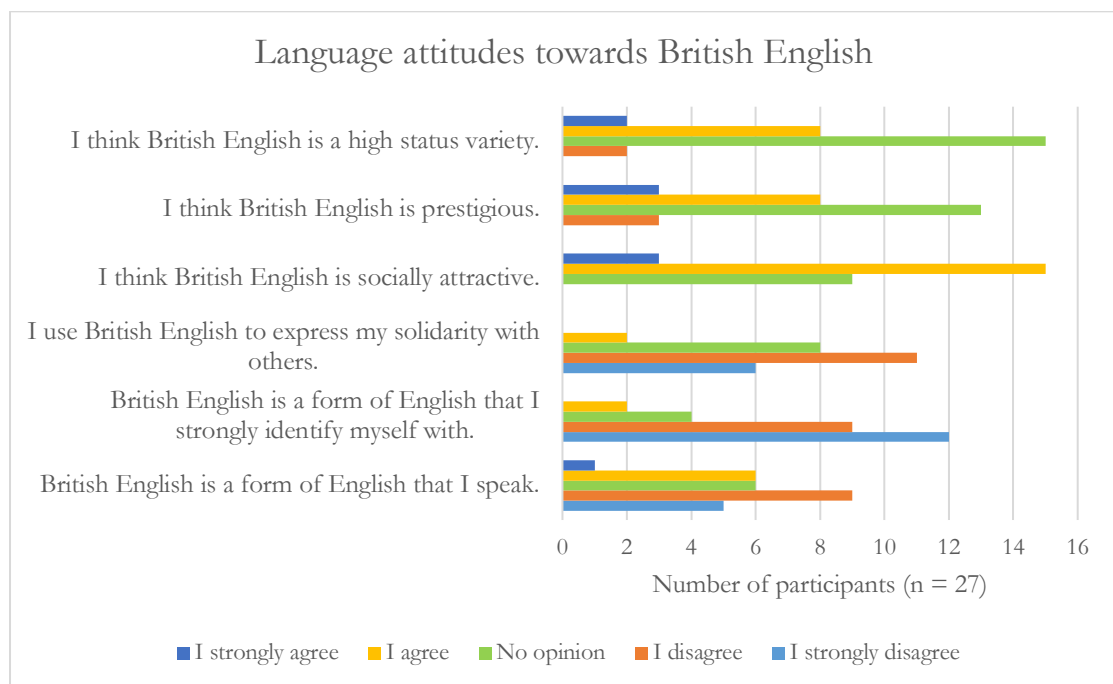


Figure 6. Language attitudes towards British English.

AmE is not thought of as a high-status variety (see Figure 7), with around two-thirds (67%) disagreeing with the statement. Over two-thirds (70%) do not consider AmE to be prestigious, though a third (30%) expressed no opinion. Half of the participants (52%) did not consider AmE as socially attractive, but again 30% had no opinion on it. Over half (55%) would not use AmE to express solidarity with others, and 37% had no opinion on it. Only 11% agreed that they strongly identify with AmE, 40% disagreed and almost 50% indicated that they have no opinion on it. Interestingly, more than half (60%) agreed that they speak AmE.

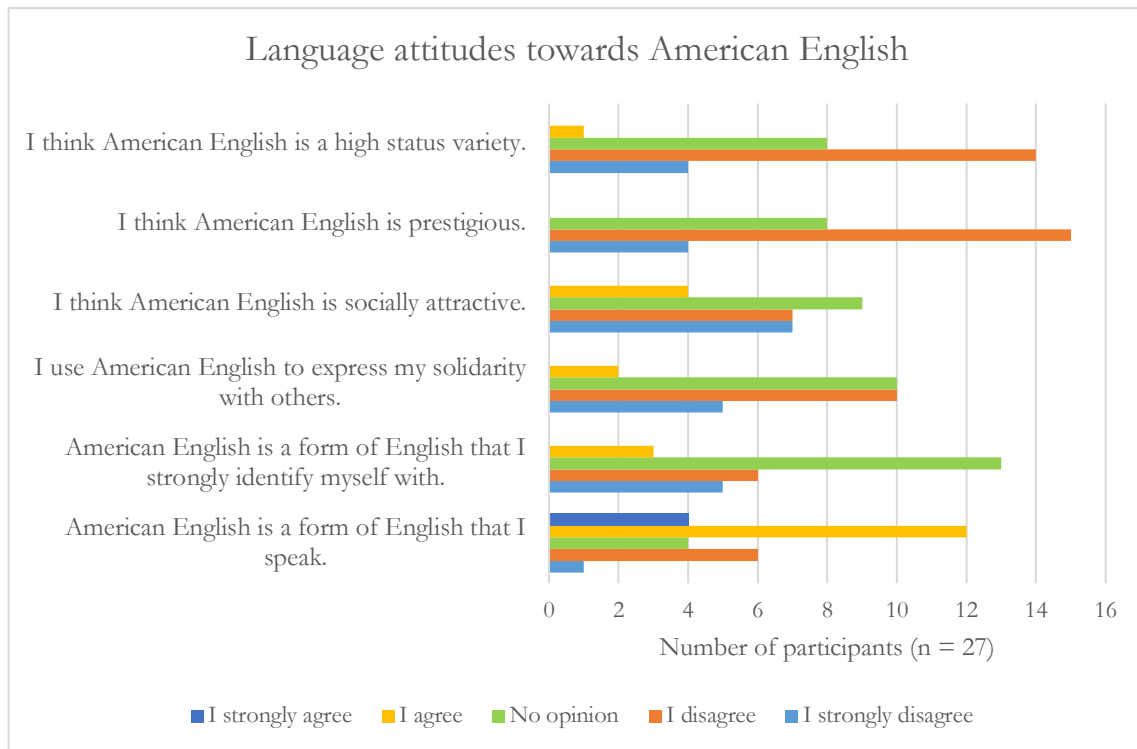


Figure 7. Language attitudes towards American English.

In terms of status and prestige, most (85%) did not consider DaE as a high-status variety (see Figure 8). There were barely any participants who had no opinion on this, and only one person agreed with the statement. A similar attitude can be seen when asked if DaE is prestigious and socially attractive. In both cases, 89% disagreed, 11% had no opinion, and not one agreed. Almost half (45%) disagreed to use DaE to express solidarity with others, 26% agreed, and 30% expressed no opinion. Around 40% agreed that they strongly identify with DaE, 19% expressed no opinion, and around 40% disagreed. There were more participants strongly disagreeing with this statement than agreeing with it. Yet around 70% indicated that they would speak DaE.

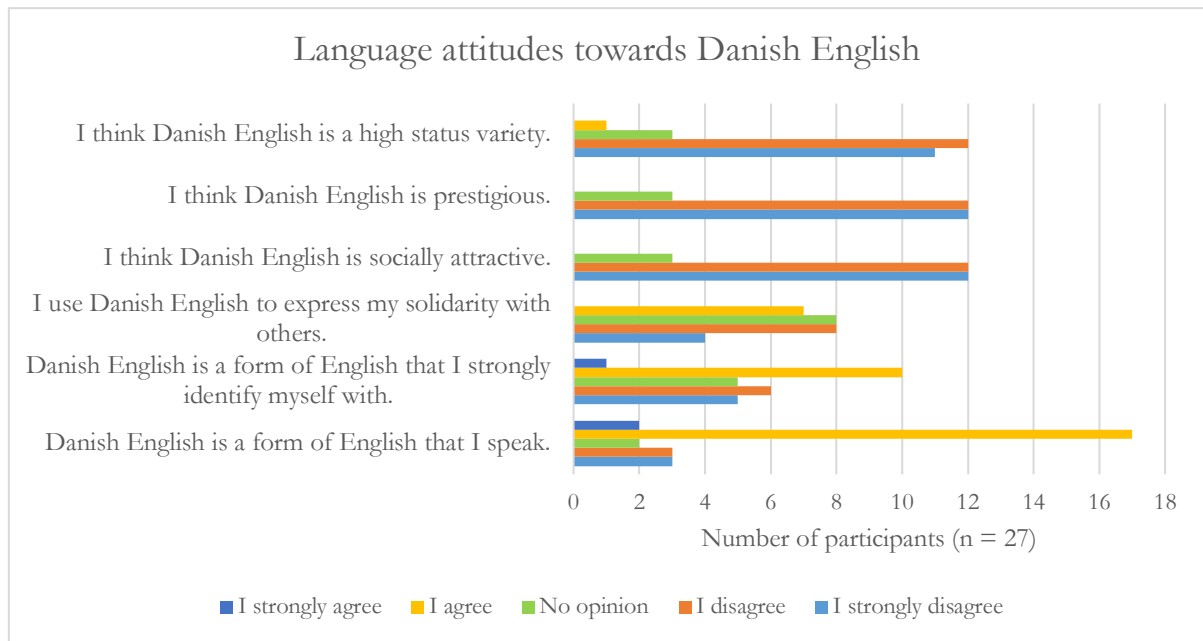


Figure 8. Language attitudes towards Danish English.

Over three-quarters (78%) do not think that InE (Indian English) is a high-status variety, 19% expressed no opinion and one person agreed (see Figure 9). Similarly, 74% disagree that InE is prestigious, around 22% expressed no opinion and one person agreed. This negative attitude changes when looking at the social attractiveness. Though quite a lot of participants (62%) did not find InE socially attractive, a quarter (26%) would agree. Around three-quarters (74%) would not express solidarity in InE and a quarter (26%) expressed no opinion. Except for one person who expressed no opinion, all participants did not see InE as a form of English they identify with. Additionally, no one thought of InE as a form of English that they speak.

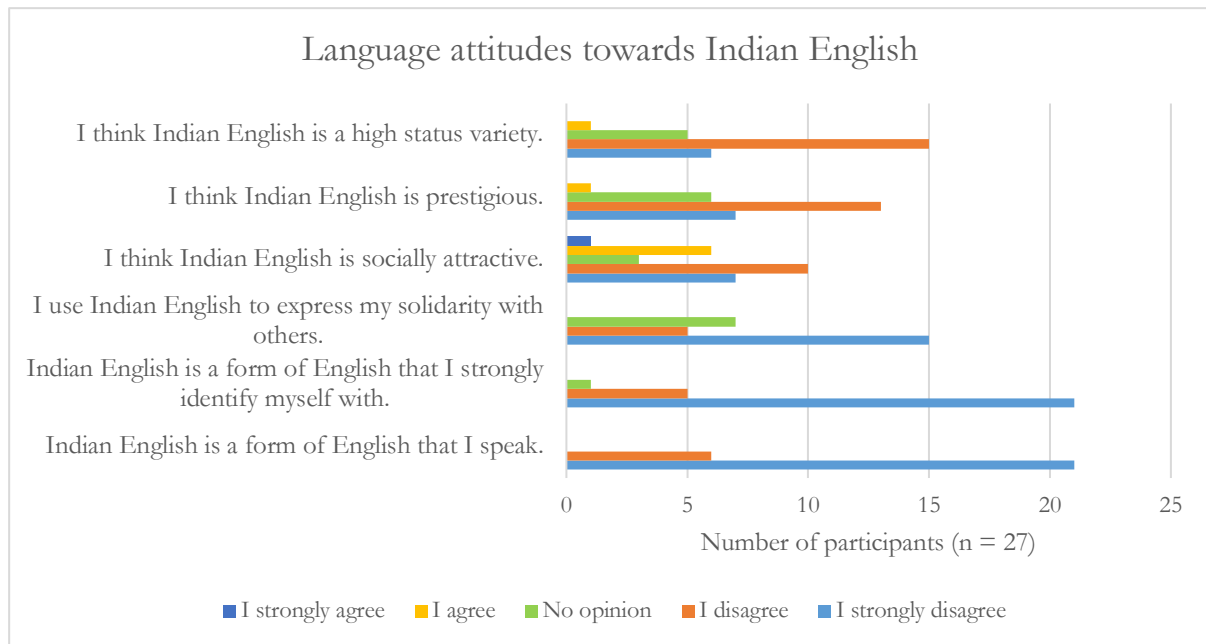


Figure 9. Language attitudes towards Indian English.

Domains of usage

In terms of formal exposure (see Appendix B), around 63% of participants have a university lecture in English at least once a week. Six people out of those 16 people study non-English subjects. 44% indicated having lectures in English two or three times a week. Two-thirds (66%) indicated that they speak English at university in a formal context (giving a presentation, talking to the professor) at least once a week. Out of those 17 people, 11 study English and 6 study non-English subjects. A third (33%) even does so two or three times a week. Interestingly, out of the four people who indicated to speak English every day, three study non-English subjects. Nearly three-quarters (74%) write academically or professionally in English at least once a week. More specifically 26% who write in English every day and 30% at least two or three times a week. The same number of participants also indicated that they read an English academic article at least once a week. A little over a third (37%) read articles every day, and out of those 10 people half study English and half a non-English subject.

Regarding informal exposure to English, half (52%) indicated that they read newspapers or magazines in English for fun at least once a week. However, 40% indicated that they do it less than once a week. Young Danes are much more exposed to English when using the Internet. Except for one participant, almost all indicated that they use the Internet at least once a week. Two-thirds (67%) use it every day. They have the most contact with English when listening to music or watching TV/series/videos. Everyone indicated to listen to English songs at least two to three

times a week and most (85%) listen to them every day. Almost everyone also watches English shows and videos at least two to three times a week and most (81%) do it every day.

Around 67% indicated that they speak English at university in an informal context (talking to friends) at least once a week. 40% speak it two or three times a week, whereas around 37% speak it less than once a week. Most (77%) speak English with their friends or relatives outside the university context at least once a week, with 37% doing so every day. Most (70%) also use English on social media at least once a week, with 30% using it two or three times a week and 30% who use it every day. Only around 26% use English to speak with family members and half (56%) never do at all.

Generally, participants indicated to communicate more in Danish (see Figure 10). Most (74%) indicated to speak more Danish. When it comes to writing, 52% indicated to write more often in Danish, while 44% write more in English. Regarding reading and listening, participants are increasingly doing it in English. Almost half (44%) indicated that they listen more in English and 30% that they do it in both languages. Nearly two-thirds (63%) indicated that they read more often in English and 15% that they do so in both languages.

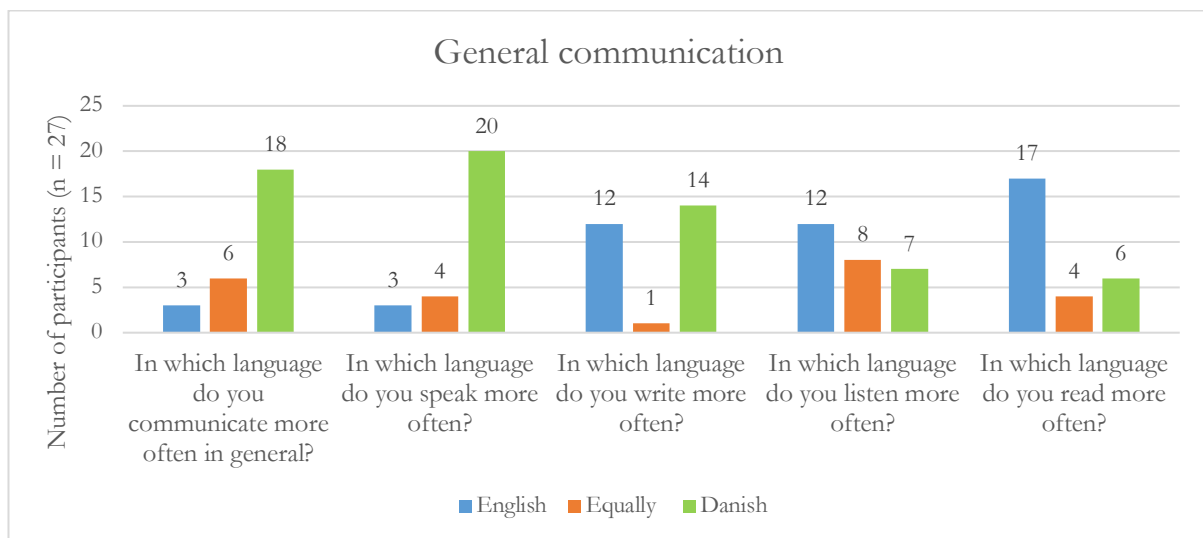


Figure 10. Distribution of participants by most frequently used language.

Nearly two-thirds (62%) also only communicate in Danish with their family and 22% use mostly Danish (see Figure 11). When communicating with friends, 11% indicated only using Danish, 41% use mostly Danish and 41% use some Danish and some English. Communication with friends in college/classmates looks quite similar: 19% only use Danish, 30% use mostly Danish, and 34% use some Danish and some English. 37% indicated that they only use Danish when communicating with colleagues and 37% use mostly Danish. Only 7% use some Danish and some English.

Participants who indicated “other” explained in the comments that it is due to them not having a job.

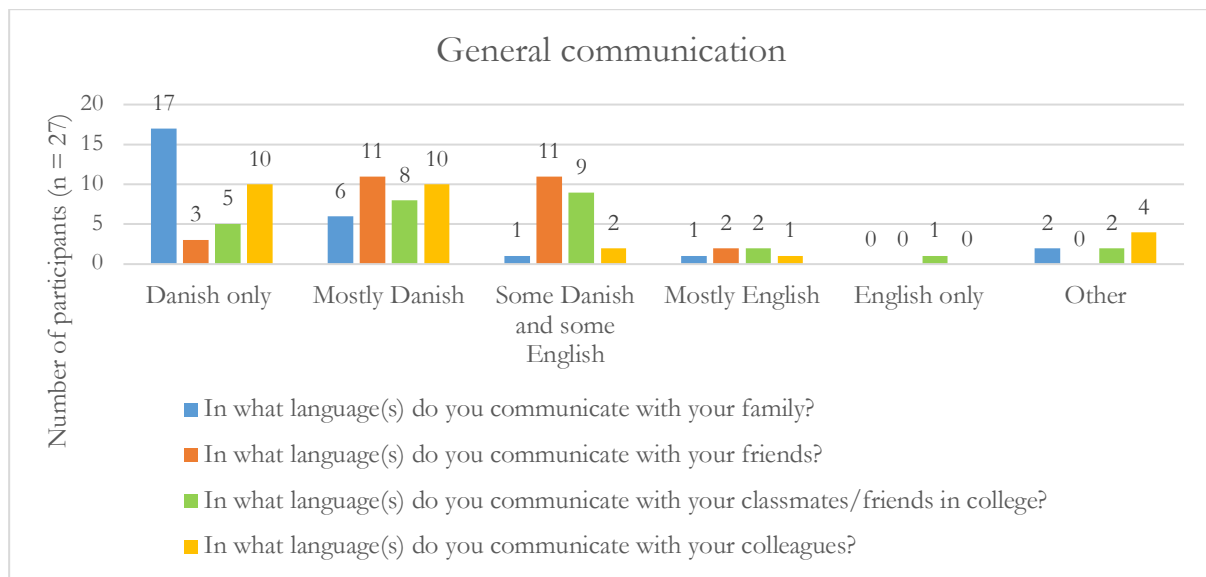


Figure 11. Distribution of participants by language most used for interaction.

Discussion

The general and personal attitudes of the participants towards English are mixed. On the one hand, they indicated that they often read and listen to English out of necessity or use English because they cannot think of the Danish word or because English sounds better. This could suggest a slight overtaking of English in the personal domain, as well as a preference for English due to it being a more prestigious language. On the other hand, the in-group loyalty towards Danish is still very strong. This language solidarity can be seen in the responses to the other statements in the first part of the survey about language attitudes. Many participants still feel strongly attached to Danish, finding it easier to express themselves or their intimate feelings in their native language. Additionally, there seems to be a certain sense of belonging to the Danish speech community, as they do not think that English sounds better than Danish and prefer to use Danish, even when they could say it in English.

The findings regarding the language attitudes towards the four different varieties of English are interesting. Looking at Table 1, BrE is seen as the variety that possesses the highest status and most prestige. The 4% who think InE is prestigious is only one person. This value can thus not be understood as either a generalisation or even an indication, as this only displays the personal preference of one person. Regarding solidarity and social attractiveness, most agreed that BrE is the most socially attractive variety. It is surprising to see that apparently InE is considered slightly

more attractive than AmE among the participants, which is caused by the 34% who indicated that they have no opinion on this matter. DaE is the variety used most to express solidarity with others. Looking at it more closely, however, 45% of the participants would disagree with this statement. As InE is not part of the standard varieties taught at school, it makes sense that no one agreed to use InE to express solidarity, identify with it, or speak it.

The variety that the young Danes in this study identified with the most is DaE, which is also the form of English that is spoken the most. This finding is in line with the findings of Skov (2022). However, many participants pointed out that they did not choose to speak DaE, but that it comes and feels more natural. However, the same number of participants also disagreed with this statement which also indicates that a Danish variety of English is not yet accepted by everyone. While the attitudes towards linguistic in-group solidarity seem to be quite positive, the opposite can be observed in terms of social attractiveness, status, and prestige. Some participants commented that they think DaE sounds horrid and is terrible to listen to, which is in line with what Thøgersen (2010, 304-305) found, namely that Danish pronunciation gets ridiculed. This is an indicator that exonormative orientation towards Received Pronunciation (RP) or Standard American (SA) is still quite strong and Danish English is not perceived as its own variety (Davydova 2020, 689).

Statement	Percentages			
	BrE	AmE	DaE	InE
<i>Dimension: status and prestige</i>				
I think X is a high-status variety.	37%	4%	4%	4%
I think X is prestigious.	41%	0%	0%	4%
<i>Dimension: solidarity and social attractiveness</i>				
X is socially attractive.	67%	15%	0%	26%
I use X to express my solidarity with others.	7%	7%	26%	0%
<i>Dimension: identity</i>				
X is a form of English I speak.	26%	59%	70%	0%
X is a form of English that I strongly identify with.	7%	11%	41%	0%

Table 1. Overview of the percentages of participants agreeing and strongly agreeing with the corresponding statement.

Despite not identifying as strongly with AmE, not perceiving it as a prestigious, socially attractive, or high-status variety, nearly 60% indicated that AmE is a form they speak, which is almost at the same level as DaE. A lot of participants commented in the beginning of the survey that they were influenced by AmE by social media, watching American TV shows, series or television, listening to American music, or having been taught in an American accent. One even commented that AmE simply sounds cool. This could explain the finding. Young Danes tend to speak AmE because they are influenced by American pop culture every day, but they never identify with the American accent on a deeper level. This seems to confirm an expectation formulated by Ladegaard and Sachdev (2006, 93) that there will be more positive attitudes towards Standard American due to the vibrant American pop culture. It also suggests that English could still be considered a foreign language as “language learning happens in spite of the fact that the students did not identify greatly with any of the [native] speakers” (Ladegaard and Sachdev 2006, 105).

Even though BrE is still dominating in the status, prestige, and social attractiveness dimension, barely anyone of the participants were able to identify with it or say that they speak it, very similar to what Ladegaard and Sachdev (2006) found. This is surprising considering that only 20 years ago, BrE was the variety predominantly used in Danish schools and most students aimed for a British accent when speaking English (Ladegaard and Sachdev 2006, 96). This has drastically changed. Participant no. 70 in this study commented that when they had to choose an accent in school, “[t]here definitely was a stigma early on about [B]ritish [E]nglish being posh so not many people actually picked that route, at least where [I] was from.” Other participants commented that they were told that BrE sounds too posh, fake, arrogant and formal, which is why they avoid speaking it. There were also some comments though mentioning that BrE is a well-formulated language and thus sounds more academic. One participant also commented that British English sounds better and more authentic. Some participants who indicated in the beginning of the survey of having no preference when it comes to their intended accent commented that they unconsciously mix and switch between AmE and BrE, as well as accommodate to the accent of the person they are speaking to. One person commented that they have no preference as they think that having a “preference is a little elitist.”

The findings in terms of formal exposure to English indicate that English does seem to be very dominant in the academic domain. Most people are in contact with English every day, either speaking, listening, or writing it. A fair number of non-English subject students also indicated being in contact with English frequently, which indicates that English is also the predominant language in other academic subjects, probably also due to many academic journals being published in English.

The English language has pretty much advanced into the personal domain too. Young Danes are most exposed to English when listening to music, watching movies or videos, or using the Internet. A finding that can also be confirmed by Bianchetti (2020). Newspapers or magazines are not that frequently read in English, which could either be because young people read fewer newspapers/magazines, or because they prefer to do it in Danish.

The advancement of English is also noticeable in the social domain. English is spoken a little less at university when there is an informal context. A lot of participants often use English when talking to friends outside the university, and when using social media. However, English has not advanced into the familiar domain so far. Most young Danes indicated in this survey that they never speak English with their family, and Danish is still the main language to communicate with them. This is also what Bianchetti (2020, 79) found, stating that “the ‘domain’ of family does not seem to be lost to English”. It also appears that Danish is the preferred language to talk to colleagues, classmates or friends, although English is also used in some peer interactions.

Regarding general communication, Danish is still the preferred language to communicate and speak in. English seems to be more influential and popular when it comes to listening and especially reading. There seems to be no preference in either Danish or English when it comes to writing. All of these findings indicate that, except for the academic domain, English does not seem to cause a domain loss of Danish and rather confirm “that English and Danish can *coexist* within Danish society” (Peterson and Fägersten 2024, 231).

Conclusion

This study has found that the personal language attitudes towards English are mixed. Though there seems to be a slight increase of English in the personal domain, the in-group loyalty towards the Danish language still seems to be very strong. Language attitudes towards other varieties seem to confirm the findings of already existing research literature. BrE is still seen as a prestige and high-value variety but is rarely chosen as an intended accent due to its perceived poshness and arrogance. AmE performs quite poorly in terms of perceived status, prestige, or social attractiveness. Although relatively few participants identify with AmE, slightly more than half report that they still choose to speak with this accent. DaE and InE both performed poorly regarding status, prestige, solidarity, and social attractiveness too. However, DaE seems to be the variety most participants can strongly identify themselves with, and surprisingly, also a form of English they would speak, despite some comments criticising DaE of sounding horrible and not being considered socially attractive.

In terms of domains of usage, the findings of this study line up with the current state of research and the findings of Bianchetti (2020). English appears to be the predominant language in

the academic and digital domain and is slowly becoming more prevalent in the social and personal domain. Danish is still the predominant language in private or informal settings and seems to be the language that is also mostly preferred in general communication, except for reading and listening. Here, English is also slowly becoming more influential, which is in line with the findings of the EF English Proficiency Index 2025 (Education First 2025, 33) mentioned in the introduction.

Considering how quickly the world is globalising and the rise of English as a lingua franca, the influence of English is likely to become stronger in some domains in the foreseeable future. Perhaps also because there will be more Danish adults in the future who were more frequently exposed to English than the current adults. The initial assumption of this article that young Danes display a more favourable attitude towards AmE could not be confirmed. Though AmE is still one of the preferred accents, the self-identification, social attractiveness, and status were considered quite low by the participants. With the current political decisions made by the US, this attitude could change again soon. Participant no. 80 summarised this quite well, commenting that “American English is glorified through Hollywood and social media [...], but as of late [,] America's falling reputation is changing the general con[c]eption”.

This study has some limitations, such as a small number of respondents resulting in a small data set that cannot generalise findings but only give indications. Additionally, it only focuses on young Danes that live in Aarhus. To gain a more representative overview of the language attitudes and domains of usage, one must also include more age groups from different parts of the country and from different socio-economic backgrounds.

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Appendix A: Overview of the questions that were asked in the survey

1. Metadata Questions (inspired by Krug, Schützler and Werner 2020)

How old are you?	Q1
What is your gender?	Q2
What is your nationality?	Q3
What is your current qualification?	Q4
What subject do/did you study?	Q5
What is your current occupation?	Q6
What accent do you aim for when speaking English?	Q7
Why did you choose the accent?	Q7.1
Did you spend a longer time living abroad in an English-speaking country?	Q8
If you said yes, which country did you live in?	Q8.1
And how long did you live there?	Q8.2

2. Language Attitudes Questions (inspired by Davydova 2020)

Attitudes towards English in general

Q1	I read and/or listen to English a lot out of necessity, as there is not enough content available in Danish.
Q2	Danish is closer to me than English.
Q3	I often can't think of a word in Danish, so I prefer to use the English word.
Q4	Some things cannot be said well enough in Danish, so I prefer to use English.
Q5	I find it easier to talk about intimate feelings, emotions and/or unpleasant topics in English.
Q6	I find it easier to express myself in English than in Danish.
Q7	English sounds better than Danish, so I often prefer to use it, even if I know how to say something in Danish.

Attitudes towards other varieties of English

British English

Q1	I think British English is a high-status variety.
Q2	I think British English is prestigious.
Q3	British English is socially attractive.
Q4	I use British English to express my solidarity with others.
Q5	British English is a form of English that I speak.
Q6	British English is a form of English that I strongly identify myself with.

American English

Q1	I think American English is a high-status variety.
Q2	I think American English is prestigious.
Q3	American English is socially attractive.
Q4	I use American English to express my solidarity with others.
Q5	American English is a form of English that I speak.
Q6	American English is a form of English that I strongly identify myself with.

Danish English

Q1	I think Danish English is a high-status variety.
Q2	I think Danish English is prestigious.
Q3	Danish English is socially attractive.
Q4	I use Danish English to express my solidarity with others.
Q5	Danish English is a form of English that I speak.
Q6	Danish English is a form of English that I strongly identify myself with.

Indian English

Q1	I think Indian English is a high-status variety.
Q2	I think Indian English is prestigious.
Q3	Indian English is socially attractive.
Q4	I use Indian English to express my solidarity with others.
Q5	Indian English is a form of English that I speak.
Q6	Indian English is a form of English that I strongly identify myself with.

Comment field

Q7	Please use the comment field below to explain why you prefer one English accent over another.
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3. Domains of Usage (inspired by Davydova 2020)

Amount of formal exposure

Q1	How often do you have a university lecture in English?
Q2	How often do you speak English at the university in a formal context, for instance, while making a presentation or talking to a professor/lecturer?
Q3	How often do you write academically or professionally in English?
Q4	How often do you read English academic journals?

Amount of informal exposure

Q1	How often do you read newspapers or magazines in English for pleasure?
Q2	How often do you use the Internet (browsing the web, ...) in English?
Q3	How often do you listen to English song lyrics?
Q4	How often do you watch original TV shows/movies or videos in English?

English use in spontaneous interactions

Q1	How often do you speak English at the university in an informal context, for instance, while chatting with your friends?
Q2	How often do you speak English with your social contacts outside the university (close friends, relatives, etc.)?
Q3	How often do you speak English in your family?
Q4	How often do you use English for communication in the social networks on the Internet (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)?

General communication

Part A

Q1	In which language do you communicate more often in general?
Q2	In which language do you write more often?
Q3	In which language do you read more often?
Q4	In which language do you speak more often?
Q5	In which language do you listen more often?

Part B

Q1	In what language(s) do you communicate with your family?
Q2	In what language(s) do you communicate with your friends?
Q3	In what language(s) do you communicate with your classmates/friends in college?
Q4	In what language(s) do you communicate with your colleagues?

Appendix B: Visualisations of the results

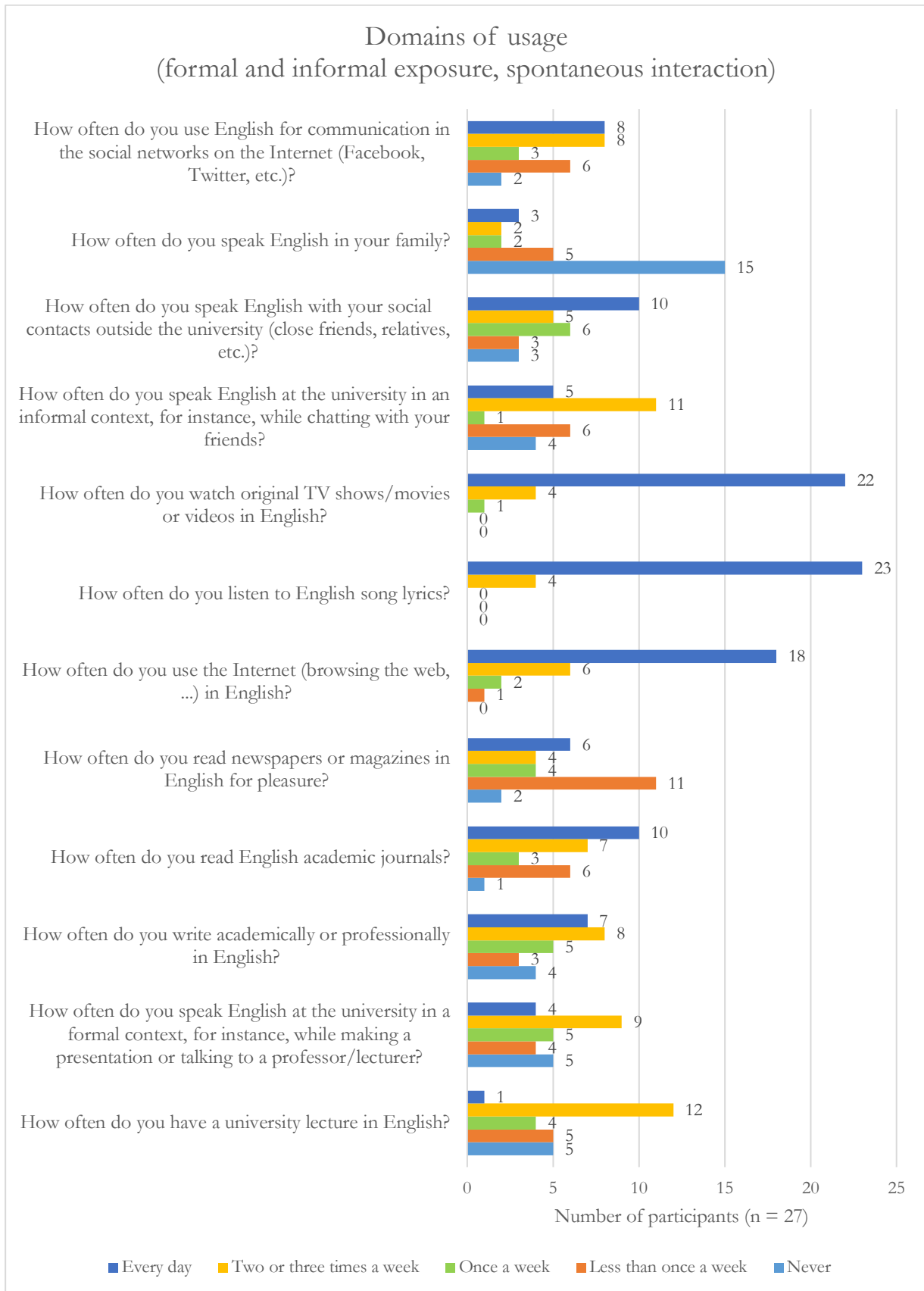


Figure 12. Participant distribution by frequency of English use in everyday life.